

## **Department of Justice**

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of Massachusetts

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, March 1, 2018

### **Massachusetts Man Arrested for Mailing Threatening Letters Containing Suspicious White Powder**

BOSTON, Massachusetts— A Beverly, Mass., man was arrested today in connection with mailing five threatening letters containing suspicious white powder to high-profile individuals around the country.

Daniel Frisiello, 24, was charged in a criminal complaint with five counts of mailing a threat to injure the person of another and five counts of false information and hoaxes. Frisiello was arrested this morning and will appear in federal court in Worcester later this afternoon.

As alleged in court documents, law enforcement has connected Frisiello to at least five incidents of high-profile individuals around the country who received an envelope that bore a Boston postmark, containing suspicious white powder and a note indicating or implying that the powder was dangerous or intended to cause harm.

“This investigation should remind people that law enforcement will prioritize finding and charging those who try to cause panic by sending threatening letters containing what looks like dangerous substances,” said United States Attorney for the District of Massachusetts Andrew E. Lelling. “Beyond terrifying the victims, these incidents caused law enforcement agencies around the country to spend time and money deploying emergency response units. Thankfully, the white powder in these letters was inert and no one was harmed. This does not change the fact that the defendant allegedly used the internet, the U.S. Mail, and popular fears of biological weapons to threaten and frighten people who did not share his views, and that is something we will prosecute accordingly.”

“This investigation by the Boston Joint Terrorism Task Force sends a strong message to those who seek to terrorize the public by sending powder letters through the mail. Whether real or a hoax, don’t do it. There are plenty of appropriate, lawful ways, to express your opinion and voice your displeasure, but inducing panic and sending what is

believed to be a weapon of mass destruction through the mail is certainly not one of them. As alleged, Mr. Frisiello sent letters from the Boston area containing white powder that required emergency responses all over the country,” said Harold H. Shaw, Special Agent in Charge, FBI Boston Division. “While we determined that the mailings did not contain toxins or poison, each of these incidents required a significant law enforcement response, a field screening of the letter’s contents, and a methodical analysis by FBI weapons of mass destruction and laboratory experts. All this comes at a cost to taxpayers’ money and diverted first responders and other limited resources away from actual emergencies.”

“The U.S. Postal Inspection Service is committed to keeping the U.S. Mail, its employees, and customers safe,” said Raymond Moss, Inspector in Charge of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, Boston Division. “When the U.S. Mail is used to transport dangerous or potentially dangerous items or substances, it is taken very seriously. The arrest of this individual is a result of a coordinated investigation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Secret Service, and other federal, state and local partners. The U.S. Postal Inspection Service will continue to investigate and bring criminals to justice to ensure the public’s trust in the U.S. Mail.”

“This case demonstrates the commitment of the U.S. Secret Service to fully investigate any type of threatening behavior directed towards our Protectees. It also highlights the ongoing collaborative efforts with our law enforcement partners, specifically the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Massachusetts, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and all of our state and local partners involved in the Joint Terrorism Task Force,” said Stephen Marks, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Secret Service Boston Field Office.

It is alleged that the first envelope was addressed to “Donald Trump Jr,” the son of President Trump, and was postmarked in Boston on Feb. 7, 2018. The addressee’s wife opened the envelope, which contained an unknown suspicious white powder, and the following printed message:

You are an awful, awful person, I  
am surprised that your father lets  
you speak on TV. You make the  
family idiot, Eric, look smart. This is

the reason why people hate you,  
so you are getting what you  
deserve. So shut the \*\*\*\* UP!

The second envelope was addressed to Nicola T. Hanna, the Interim United States Attorney for the Central District of California. Also postmarked in Boston on Feb. 7, 2018, the envelope contained an unknown suspicious white powder, which spilled out when it was opened. The letter inside the envelope bore the following printed message:

That's for murdering Mark Salling! I

Hope you end up the same place as Salling.

As alleged in court documents, Mark Salling, who committed suicide in January 2018, was a defendant in a child pornography case being prosecuted by Hanna's office.

Subsequent envelopes containing threatening letters were mailed to Michele Dauber, a Professor of Law at Stanford University; U.S. Senator Deborah Stabenow of Michigan; and Antonio Sabato Jr., who is running for a congressional seat in California.

After each envelope was opened, a hazardous material response was required by law enforcement.

It was determined that there were notable commonalities among the envelopes, including that all five envelopes contained an unknown powdered substance, which has since been determined to be nonhazardous. Further investigation revealed that Professor Dauber was also sent a "glitter bomb." A glitter bomb is a letter containing glitter sent to an unsuspecting individual that, when opened, spills out onto the recipient. Law enforcement traced financial records to Frisiello who ordered and paid for the glitter bomb to be delivered to Professor Dauber. Furthermore, on Feb. 21, 2018, agents recovered trash from Frisiello's residence that appeared to contain remnants of the cut-out messages that Frisiello allegedly sent to the victims.

The charge of mailing a threat to injure the person of another provides for a sentence of no greater than five years in prison, 10 years in prison for threats addressed to a federal official, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. The charge of false information and hoaxes provides for a sentence of no greater than five years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a

federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

U.S. Attorney Lelling, FBI SAC Shaw, Acting Inspector in Charge Moss, USSS SAC Marks and Beverly Police Chief John G. LeLacheur made the announcement today. This investigation was conducted by the FBI Boston Division's Joint Terrorism Task Force led by members of the FBI, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, U.S. Secret Service and the Beverly Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott Garland of Lelling's National Security Unit.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendant is presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.